

## Creating a Heart Map

**Hook:** Return to any personal narrative read-alouds you have used in the classroom and talk about where the author might have gotten the idea for the story. Encourage your writers to think in terms of “big ideas”—family, school, and so on. *When I Was Little: A Four-Year-Old’s Memoir of Her Youth* by Jamie Lee Curtis works well to help primary students understand writing territories. Students can easily identify many writing territories for the child in the book, such as people she knows, family, things she likes to do, and school. Options: *Goin’ Someplace Special* by Patricia McKissack, *In My Momma’s Kitchen* by Jerdine Nolen, *Song and Dance Man* by Karen Ackerman.

**Purpose:** *Sometimes it’s hard to think about something to write about. This happens to all writers. It’s important to remember that writing comes from your mind and your heart. Today I will show you how to make a heart map. A heart map is a way to remember what is in your mind and your heart so that you’ll always have something to write about.*

**Brainstorm:** Think aloud about the big ideas that are in your mind and your heart that might give you lots of stories to write about—family, school, a hobby, and so on. Quickly relate some stories within those categories. It is important to demonstrate that these are big ideas, not small moments of time that capture a single event. Ask the students to share some of the things they might put on their heart maps. These ideas can be listed on the board or simply shared orally.

**Model:** Share your own heart map. You can either have this created ahead of time or quickly sketch it in front of the students. At this point, the heart map does not have to be completely filled in. Choose a section and relate a small story that comes from it. Write a short entry on the board or overhead.

**Shared/Guided Writing:** Invite one or two students to the front of the room to share their ideas in a guided conversation. If they start to relate single-event stories, for example, if they say something like “One day my brother and my dad and I caught ten fish,” ask them if they have any other stories about their brother or dad. Lead them to the understanding that the place they might put on their heart map for these stories would be a place for family. Questions such as the following can help guide their thinking: